

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-15 are pending in this application.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 10, 12, 13, and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kitamura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,400,463, herein Kitamura) in view of Sugishima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,797,706, herein Sugishima); and Claims 11 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kitamura and Sugishima in view of Nakai (U.S. Patent No. 6,081,342).

Applicants and Applicants' representatives thank Examiner Wallerson for the courtesy of the interview granted to Applicants' representatives on March 1, 2006. During the interview, differences between the claims and Sugishima were discussed. Examiner Wallerson agreed to reconsider the rejection of record after formal submission of the present response.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Kitamura in view of Sugishima, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 10 recites in part, "the first image forming apparatus is configured to display in a link copy mode **only** keys for selection of usable functions in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected, the usable functions being functions which **both** the first image formation apparatus and the second image formation apparatus are able to execute."

The outstanding Office Action concedes at page 2, lines 24 to page 3, line 3 that Kitamura does not teach this feature. The outstanding Office Action cites Sugishima as describing this element at column 18, lines 12-18. However, column 17, line 46 to column 18, lines 51 of Sugishima describes an exemplary embodiment where **all** functions usable for **any** of the linked printers are displayed.

In the example described by Sugishima, printer #1 includes only A3 and A4 paper and printer #3 includes only A4, B4, and A4R size paper.¹ However, Sugishima describes an apparatus that displays *every* paper size available for *any* of the attached printers.² For example, at column 18, lines 25-28, Sugishima describes that “since A3 sheets are set in the lower cassette of printer #1, A3 is displayed as indicated in FIG. 15-2.” In fact, as discussed in column 18, lines 25-40, *all* of A3, A4, B4, and A4R are displayed by the apparatus described by Sugishima, as these paper sizes are available in either one of printers #1 and #3, or in both. Paper sizes B5, B5R, U1, and U3 are not displayed because they are not available in either of printers #1 and #3.

In contrast, an apparatus in accordance with Claim 10 would *not* list A3, B4, A4R, B5, B5R, U1, or U3, as these sizes are not available to *both* printers #1 and #3 in the example described in Sugishima at column 17, line 46 to column 18, lines 51. An apparatus in accordance with Claim 10 would list *just* A4 for this example, which is the only paper size available to *both* printers #1 and #3.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that not only does Sugishima fail to teach or suggest “the first image forming apparatus is configured to display in a link copy mode *only keys for selection of usable functions* in the link copy mode after the link copy mode has been selected, the usable functions being functions which *both* the first image formation apparatus and the second image formation apparatus are able to execute,” but in fact teaches contrary to this element. Accordingly, as neither of the cited references teach or suggest “a first image forming apparatus” as recited in Claim 10, Claim 10 (and Claims 11 and 12 dependent therefrom) is patentable over Kitamura in view of Sugishima.

¹See Sugishima, column 17, lines 48-57.

²See Sugishima, column 18, lines 24-46.

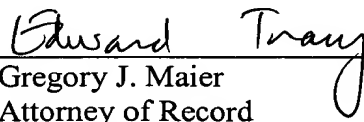
As Claim 13 recites similar elements to Claim 10, Claim 13 (and Claims 14 and 15 dependent therefrom) is patentable over Kitamura in view of Sugishima for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 10.

With regard to the rejection of Claims 11 and 14 as unpatentable over Kitamura in view of Sugishima and further in view of Nakai, it is noted that Claims 11 and 14 are dependent from Claims 10 and 13, respectively, and thus are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Nakai does not cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Kitamura and Sugishima. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 11 and 14 are patentable over Kitamura in view of Sugishima and further in view of Nakai.

Accordingly, no further issues are believed to be outstanding and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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